

# Post-2025 AMAs Committee Meeting

Governor's Water Augmentation Innovation & Conservation Council

October 27, 2021







# Solutions Phase Process to Date

Since June 2021, Committee discussed and suggested ideas to address –

- Groundwater in the Assured Water Supply Program
- Unreplenished Groundwater Withdrawals
- Hydrologic Disconnect

Objective – Consider issues holistically, fine-tune most realistic, support strategies and solutions to address the three issues.

November 30<sup>th</sup> - Present general consensus proposals to GWAICC

2022 – Continue discussion to develop additional strategies and solutions





# Putting together a Package

- The Co-Chairs have grouped together a series of proposals – the 2021 Package – for consideration to be done in the coming year and are combination of legislation, rules and policy
- Concepts or ideas not in the 2021 Package are still alive for discussion in 2022

## Criteria used by Co-Chairs for selecting proposals for this 2021 Package –

- Address more than one challenge or opportunity
- Gain general overall support from the Committee
- Politically viable in 2022 Legislative Session

**Today's Meeting** – Determine overall support from the Committee to recommend to GWAICC





# 2021 Package of Post-2025 AMAs Proposals

- Improve the Regulatory Process for Recharge & Recovery
- Amend ADWR's Volumetric Accounting Policy for Commingled Water Supplies
- Remove WaterBUD Restrictions
- Establish a Cut-to-the-Aquifer for Annual Storage & Recovery outside of AOI
- Establish a Mechanism/Structure for Augmentation in the AMAs
- Accelerate ADEQ's Development of Administrative Rules for Direct Potable Reuse
- Land status tax policy to decrease groundwater mining in the AMAs





## **Improve the Regulatory Process for Recharge & Recovery**

- Stakeholders have encountered regulatory obstacles with new and existing recharge facilities and with recovery.
- ADWR has started to address some of these issues.
- Review the recharge and recovery program with stakeholder engagement.

## **Amend ADWR's Volumetric Accounting Policy for Commingled Water Supplies**

- Enable a developer to provide water to a water provider that can then serve that water through the provider's mixed system without regard to historic volumetric accounting policy.





## **Remove WaterBUD Restrictions**

- Current statutes prevent the accrual of Long-Term Storage Credits for certain entities that are pumping groundwater.
- This statutory provision was an early component of the underground storage statutes to encourage direct use of renewable supplies.
- Removing all or part of "WaterBUD" would allow entities to accrue or buy LTSC regardless of their groundwater pumping.

## **Establish a Cut-to-the-Aquifer for Annual Storage & Recovery outside of the AOI**

- To help decrease unreplenished groundwater pumping.
- Incentivize annual recovery near the location of storage in a way that helps to mitigate the hydrologic disconnect.





## **Establish a Mechanism/Structure for Augmentation in the AMAs**

- Coordinated focused effort to develop new water supplies in the AMAs.
- Allow interested entities to collaborate and combine resources to obtain new supplies and build necessary infrastructure.
- Regional authorization to gather fees with purposes such as infrastructure and renewable water supplies.





## **Accelerate ADEQ's Development of Administrative Rules for Direct Potable Reuse**

- Provide resources to ADEQ to fast track updating the Arizona Administrative Code on Purified Water for Potable Use.
- Demonstrate stakeholder support and community benefit for direct potable reuse.
- Ensure regulations are in place so public and private water providers have a clear path for developing this resource.

## **Promote smart tax policy to decrease groundwater mining in AMAs**

- Adding temporary and permanent fallowing as a classification of agricultural tax status will allow landowners retain a lower tax rate without needing to apply water to the land.
- Better align the tax structure with an AMA's water management goals.



# **Other Proposals Identified by Committee Members to be further discussed in 2022**

- **Prescott AMA Exempt Wells Concepts**
- **Address the Subdividing Loophole in AWS Program for development that doesn't require replenishment**
- **Encourage Urban Development on Agricultural Lands**
- **Evaluate the allowable groundwater pumping depth in the AWS Program, currently ~1,000' below land surface**
- **Facilitate Groundwater Transfers**
- **Recovery of LTSC stored in the Tonopah Area**
- **Identification of potential aquifer recharge locations for preservation**
- **Limitations on Groundwater Withdrawals**
- **Limit Unreplenished Pumping in the Industrial Sector**
- **Revisit Conservation Requirements in Management Plans**
- **Evaluate the AOHI associated with Groundwater Savings Facilities**
- **Require CAGRDR Replenishment within the AOI of Development**
- **Review ADWR's Assured Water Supply Model Run Assumptions**





## Next Steps

- Nov 9<sup>th</sup> – Post 2025 AMAs Committee – Further discussion of package – if necessary
- Nov 30<sup>th</sup> – Present generally agreed-upon 2021 Package to the GWAICC
- Move any legislative items in the 2021 Package to a Legislative Stakeholder process for further discussion
- 2022 – Continue discussion of other Post 2025 ideas